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Thursday, February 4, 2021

+ **OPENING CALL TO PRAISE AND PRAYER**

O God, open our lips,

and our mouths shall proclaim your praise.

From the rising of the sun to its setting,

we praise your name, O God.

+ **REMEMBRANCE OF BAPTISM**

By Word and water God renews us this day

in the living fountain of God's grace,

and raises us with Christ Jesus

to live a new life in the Spirit.

* OSL

Satisfy us in the morning

with your steadfast love, O God,

that we may sing for joy

and be glad all our days.

PSALM 90:14

+ **MORNING CANTICLE OF JOY**

Be joyful in the Lord, all you lands;

serve the Lord with gladness

and come before his presence with a song.

Know this: The Lord himself is God;

he himself has made us, and we are his;

we are his people and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter his gates with thanksgiving;

go into his courts with praise;

give thanks to him and call upon his Name.

For the Lord is good;

his mercy is everlasting;

and his faithfulness endures from age to age.

PSALM 100

+ **MORNING PRAYER**

The Holy One* be with you;

And also with you.

Let us pray:

Oh God, The Holy Spirit,

come to us, and among us;

come as the wind, and cleanse us;

come as the fire, and burn;

come as the dew, and refresh;

convict, convert, and consecrate many hearts and lives to

our great good and to your greater glory;

and this we ask for Jesus Christ's sake. ***Amen***

[UM Book of Worship.]

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+ **Psalm 147:1-11** NRSV

***Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.***

¹ Praise the LORD!

How good it is to sing praises to our God;
for he is gracious, and a song of praise is *fitting*.

² The LORD builds up Je-ru-sa-lem;
he gathers the out-casts of *Israel*.

³ He heals the bro-ken-*hearted*,
and binds up their *wounds*.

⁴ He determines the number of the *stars*;
he gives to all of them their *names*.

⁵ Great is our Lord, and abundant in *power*;
his understanding is be-yond *measure*.

⁶ The LORD lifts up the down-*trodden*;
he casts the wicked to the *ground*.

⁷ Sing to the LORD with thanks-*giving*;
make melody to our God on the *lyre*.

⁸ He covers the heavens with *clouds*,
prepares rain for the earth,
makes grass grow on the *hills*.

⁹ He gives to the animals their *food*,
and to the young ravens when they *cry*.

¹⁰ His delight is not in the strength of the *horse*,
nor his pleasure in the speed of a *runner*;

¹¹ but the LORD takes pleasure in those who fear *him*,
in those who hope in his stead-fast *love*.

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

***Sing to the LORD with thanksgiving;
make melody to our God on the lyre.***

+SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ **WORD: Galatians 5:2-15** VOICE

² Listen because I, Paul, am going to make this message very clear so *it cannot be misunderstood*: if you undergo the rite of circumcision, then all that the Anointed accomplished will be lost on you. ³ And understand this: if you choose to be circumcised, then you will oblige yourself to do every single rule of the law *for the rest of your life*. ⁴ You, *and anyone else* who seeks to be on the right side of God through the law, have effectively been cut off from the Anointed, *circumcised from grace*, and cast off from the favor of God. ⁵ We, on the other hand, *continue to live* through the Spirit's power and wait

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confidently in the hope that things will be put right through faith. ⁶ Here's the thing: in Jesus the Anointed whether you are circumcised or not makes no difference. What makes a difference is faith energized by love.

⁷ Who has impeded your progress and kept you from obeying the truth? You were off to such a good start. ⁸ *I know for certain* the pressure isn't coming from God. He keeps calling you *to the truth*. ⁹ *You know what they say*, "Just a little yeast causes all the dough to rise," so *even the slightest detour from the truth will take you to a destination you do not desire*. ¹⁰ *Despite this*, I'm confident because the Lord *reassures me that you will truly hear and take my message to heart*. Besides, *I also know that* these troublemakers, whoever they are, will answer to God and be judged accordingly. ¹¹ As for me, brothers and sisters, if I continue to preach circumcision—as *these agitators claim*—then why do I still face persecution? *If I were to preach a compromised version of the good news*, then the scandal of the cross would come to an end. ¹² I really wish that these people who weigh you down with corrupt counsel would mutilate themselves!

¹³ Brothers and sisters, God has called you to freedom! *Hear the call*, and do not *spoil this gift* by using your

liberty to engage in what your flesh desires; instead, use it to serve each other *as Jesus taught* through love. ¹⁴ For the whole law comes down to this one instruction: "Love your neighbor as yourself," so ¹⁵ why all this vicious gnawing on each other? If you are not careful, you will find you've eaten each other alive!

Holy wisdom, holy word.
Thanks be to God!

+SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

+ [CANTICLE OF ZECHARIAH](#)

We bless you, Adonai, God of *Israel*,
for you come to visit us and ransom us from *bondage*.
You have brought forth a strong De-liverer
in the house of your child *David*.

**This is what your holy prophets an-nounced:
deliverance from enemies
and from the hand of all who hate *us*;
mercy a-mong our *ancestors*,
and remembrance of your ho-ly *covenant*.**

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This is the promise you swore
to our an-cestor, *Abraham*,
to make us un-a-fraid,
to rescue us from our *enemies*,
to serve before you, holy and just,
all the days of our *lives*.

**And this, my little child,
shall be called prophet of the Most *High*,
going before you, Adonai, to pre-pare your *paths*,
making your people know de-*liverance*
by the forgiveness of their *sins*.
Through your merciful compassions, God our *God*,
the dawn from on high shall *visit us*,
to shine on those kept in dungeons
and the shadows of *death*
and to guide our feet onto the path of *peace*.**

LUKE 1:68-79

Glory to you, O Trinity, most holy and *blessed*,
one God, now and for-ever, *A-men*.

+ **THE APOSTLE'S CREED**

***I believe in God,
the Father Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth.
And in Jesus Christ,
his only Son, our Lord;
who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary,
suffered under Pontius Pilate,
was crucified, died, and was buried;
the third day he rose from the dead;
he ascended into heaven,
and sits at the right hand of the Father Almighty.
From there he shall come again to judge
the living and the dead.
I believe in the Holy Spirit,
the holy catholic Church,
the communion of saints,
the forgiveness of sins,
the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting. Amen.***

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+ **COMMEMORATION: CORNELIUS THE CENTURION**

All that we know of Cornelius is contained in the Book of Acts (chapters 10 and 11). A centurion was a Roman army officer, theoretically in charge of a hundred men. Several centurions are mentioned in the New Testament (Matthew 8:5 = Luke 7:2; Matthew 27:54 = Luke 23:47; Acts 10:1; 22:25; 23:17,23; 22:23; 27:1), and they are consistently portrayed favorably.

Cornelius was the first Gentile converted to Christianity, along with his household, and Luke, recording this event, clearly regards it as an event of the utmost importance in the history of the early Church, the beginning of the Church's decision to admit Gentiles to full and equal fellowship with Jewish Christians.

One day, as he was praying, an angel appeared to him and told him to send a messenger to Joppa and ask Peter to come and preach to him. Peter, meanwhile, was given a vision that disposed him to go with the messenger. When Peter had preached to Cornelius and his family and friends, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as on the first Christians at Pentecost (Acts 2), and they began to speak in other tongues. Thus, there was ample evidence to

convince Jewish Christians who hesitated to believe that it was the will of God that Gentiles should be brought into the Church.

Cornelius lived in Caesarea, the political capital of Judea under Herod and the Romans. Although he is not mentioned again, he and his household presumably formed the nucleus of the Christian community that we find mentioned later (Acts 8:40; 21:18) in this important city.

[by James Kiefer](#)

+ SILENCE FOR REFLECTION

COLLECT: CORNELIUS THE CENTURION

O God, who by your Spirit called Cornelius the Centurion to be the first Christian among the Gentiles: Grant to your church such a ready will to go where you send and to do what you command that the prejudices that blind us might cease, and that we might welcome all who turn to you in love; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen.

* Holy Women, Holy Men

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+ **PRAYERS**

The Holy One be with you,
and also with you.

Let us pray: *(stop and pray for those on your heart today)*

+ PRAYER OF JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

Almighty God, you have given us grace at this time with one accord to make our common supplication to you; and you have promised through your well-beloved Son that when two or three are gathered together in his Name you will be in the midst of them: Fulfill now, O Lord, our desires and petitions as may be best for us; granting us in this world knowledge of your truth, and in the age to come life everlasting. Amen.

+ PRAYERS FOR THOSE WHO MOURN

Gracious God, as your son wept with Mary and Martha at the tomb of Lazarus, look with compassion this day on those who grieve. Grant them the assurance of your presence now and faith in your eternal goodness, that in

them may be fulfilled the promise that those who mourn shall be comforted; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

United Methodist Hymnal - *adapted*

+ FOR PEACE

Eternal God, in whose perfect kingdom no sword is drawn but the sword of righteousness, no strength known but the strength of love: So mightily spread abroad your Spirit, that all peoples may be gathered under the banner of the Prince of Peace, as children of one Father; to whom be dominion and glory, now and forever. Amen.

+ COVID POEM (read as a prayer this morning)

When this is over,
may we never again
take for granted,
A handshake with a stranger
Full shelves at the store
Conversations with neighbors
A crowded theatre
Friday night out

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The taste of communion
A routine checkup
The school rush each morning
Coffee with a friend
The stadium roaring
Each deep breath
A boring Tuesday
Life itself.

When this ends,
may we find
that we have become
more like the people
we wanted to be
we were called to be
we hoped to be
and may we stay
that way--better
for each other
because of the worst.

- Laura Kelley Fanucci

+ COLLECT OF THE WEEK

Almighty and everlasting God, you govern all things both in heaven and on earth: Mercifully hear the supplications of your people, and in our time grant us your peace; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.

+ THE LORD'S PRAYER

***Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
now and forever. Amen.***

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+ **CONCLUDING PRAYER**

Lord God, almighty and everlasting Father,
You have brought us in safety to this new day:
preserve us with your mighty power,
that we may not fall into sin,
nor be overcome by adversity;
and in all we do direct us to the fulfilling of your purpose,
through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

+ **BLESSING**

I pray that God, the source of all hope, will infuse our lives
with an abundance of joy and peace in the midst of our
faith, so that our hope will overflow through the power of
the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

Romans 15:13 *THE VOICE*

Morning Prayer

A ministry of the faithful at
Elwood United Methodist Church

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